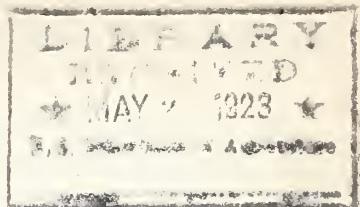


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THE EXTENSION HORTICULTURIST

May 1, 1923.



Fruit and vegetable prospects throughout the country is a matter of great importance to horticultural and pomological workers at the present time. We have within the past few days received reports from a number of states giving the latest fruit and vegetable conditions.

On the Atlantic Coast the season has been extremely backward with an unusual percentage of cold weather which has greatly retarded the growth of crops. Crops such as potatoes and cabbage, which withstand considerable cold, are looking fairly well in most sections, but are late in their development. Peas, on the other hand, show decided injury and a greatly retarded growth as a result of cold weather. Beans are in very poor condition.

Fruit prospects throughout the central and southern sections are extremely variable and spotted as indicated by the more detailed report contained in this number of the "Extension Horticulturist."

We desire to acknowledge with thanks the splendid cooperation we have received from the state specialists and others in the matter of securing information on present fruit and vegetable conditions.

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Office of Horticultural and Pomological Investigations
and States Relations Service Cooperating,
U. S. Department of Agriculture,
Washington, D. C.

Fruit Crop Prospects.

In response to our appeal in the April number of the "Extension Horticulturist" and to letters sent to the workers later, we have received reports on fruit conditions from the following states:

New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Ohio, Indiana, Arkansas, and Texas. It is yet too early to get definite reports from the North Central, New England and Northwestern States and the conditions in those sections will be given in the June number.

New Jersey

Report by A. F. Mason, Specialist in Horticulture.

Due to the fact that the spring is about two weeks late in New Jersey, it is impossible to give definite information as to the fruit prospects. The peach trees are just beginning to bloom in the southernmost portions of the State, while the apples do not even show pink. It will be early May before any real information can be gained as to the bloom of the apples. However, a statement of the condition before bloom can be given.

Apples.

All varieties promising, with indications of a heavy crop should the weather develop normally. The trees went into the winter in perfectly dormant condition, and there is no sign of bud injury appearing. Plenty of moisture and good growing conditions in the early summer last year made excellent wood growth and put the trees in favorable condition to set buds. The Glassboro district, which is one of the heaviest producing districts in the State, has been light for two years due to frost, and should be in condition to set a bumper crop.

Peaches.

Some varieties of peaches, noticeably Carman overbore last year, and did not set a satisfactory crop of buds in many places. Other than this, prospects for peaches this year are excellent. As with the apples, the peaches went into winter in good condition, and remained dormant until within the last three weeks. The late spring makes chances more favorable for satisfactory temperature conditions at the time of blooming and afterward.

Pears.

The pear crop in the State is almost entirely confined to the variety Kieffer. The trees have had only light crops the last few years, due partly to weather conditions and partly to unknown reasons. However, the bud set is excellent, and with very favorable weather conditions a good crop may be secured. The acreage is being rapidly reduced, because the growers are cutting down their trees.

Cherries.

The cherry crop promises well. There is an excellent set of buds and the trees wintered well.

Strawberries.

A good covering of snow caused the berry plants to winter well, and indications are for a good year.

Maryland

Information furnished by S. B. Shaw, Horticulturist.

From reports received, it is believed that with the exception of a few isolated places, most of the fruit crop in Maryland is safe, and the extent of the damage from the recent cold wave is not as great as was at first anticipated.

Reports from Washington County indicate that while there was some damage to sweet cherries and plums, apples suffered practically no injury and peaches were only injured to a very small extent.

Reports from the Eastern Shore indicate that in the immediate vicinity of Berlin, peaches, apples, cherries and strawberries are in excellent condition. No damage has been reported from the sections around Hurlock and Easton.

It appears that in many of our fruit sections in Maryland, the cold weather has retarded the development of fruit buds to such an extent that recent frosts have apparently done little damage. Only in isolated places has there been any appreciable injury and it is felt that generally speaking enough fruit buds have been saved to insure a prediction of at least a satisfactory fruit crop. This seems especially true of apples. It is believed that on the whole the entire situation may be viewed with optimism.

Virginia.

Report by Mr. G. S. Ralston, Extension Horticulturist.

First, regarding peach prospects. Southern Virginia suffered very severely from the freezes of a couple of weeks ago. The crop will be very light. Practically all trees have a few peaches left on them but scarcely enough in most cases to spray. The Roanoke, Lynchburg, and Crozet districts suffered slightly less but still have the crop ruined as a commercial proposition with the exception of a very few orchards. The northern Piedmont and Valley sections of the State still contain fair prospects for a peach crop.

The apple situation is very good. There was some injury on practically all varieties, but there is an abundance of fruit buds left on the big commercial varieties to insure a full crop if no further injury occurs. The Black Twig suffered the most among the commercial winter varieties. Pippins are hurt in a few orchards. On account of the relatively light

bloom in some orchards following a heavy crop last year, the crop will be curtailed somewhat. The summer apples suffered to a greater extent. Yellow Transparents were quite badly injured in the southern half of the State and both Transparent and Duchess are injured rather severely in the northern half of the State. However, some Transparent plantings in the northern end of the State suffered very little loss.

It might be said that the apple situation is very promising, but that not more than 30 per cent of a peach crop can be expected in the State. Of course, this condition may be modified from that given, even without further injury, but I would expect the prospects to become more favorable rather than less favorable.

Cherries, plums, and such fruits were more severely injured than the apples, but generally speaking they are in as good shape as the peach crop.

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West Virginia.

Report by Mr. T. D. Gray, Specialist in Horticulture.

There is a wide variation in the injury to fruit from the freeze of April 1st in different sections of the State.

Through the central mountainous sections of the State, I find that the peaches have been largely killed; practically 80% of the buds being destroyed. Along the Ohio River section which is one of the large peach sections of the State, there is at least 60 to 70 per cent of the buds killed. In the eastern Panhandle reports indicate that there has not been so much damage done at the present time. This I question very much and feel safe in saying that at least 50% of the buds have already been killed.

Only a few varieties of apples have been injured by the cold, these being the early blooming varieties such as Stayman, Grimes, Black Twig, Starks Delicious and Smokehouse. I find that through the central part of the State that at least 80% of the buds of these varieties were injured by that early frost. Along the Ohio River section the injury is not so great, probably amounting to not more than 40% of the buds. In the eastern Panhandle the injury to buds is reported as being negligible. The later blooming varieties such as York Imperial, Rome Beauty, Ralls Janet, and Northern Spy are unhurt throughout the State. This would also hold true of the Willow Twig.

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Tennessee

Report by N. D. Peacock, Horticulturist.

In answer to your letter of April 14, I will say that the peach crop in Tennessee has been very severely injured by freezing weather. Probably 75 per cent of the fruit was killed. This means that we will have a very light crop.

Apples are injured somewhat but I believe enough blossoms are unharmed to make a good crop. Strawberries are uninjured.

North Carolina.
Report by C. D. Matthews, State Horticulturist.

In general let me say all crops are in promising condition at present with the exception of peaches, they having been severely injured throughout the State, and even in the sand hill section which has never been severely injured before, there is considerable damage. Peaches were injured by the cold snap which occurred during the first week in April. The temperature, according to the Director of the Weather Bureau in this State, was five degrees lower than any previous week of the same date in the history of the Weather Bureau for this section.

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South Carolina
Information by Geo. P. Hoffman.

Peaches in the southern part of South Carolina bear a full crop. However, there are indications of considerable winter injury to the terminal growth of the trees and a safe forecast of the peach prospects cannot be made until after the May drop. In the northeastern portion of the State where peach injury seldom occurs the damage has been considerable. The fruit prospects in the western part of the State are fair, some frost injury, however, having occurred.

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Georgia
Report by T. H. McHatton, Horticulturist.

The cold weather in Georgia this spring does not seem to have injured the apple crop. Estimates as to the total production this year are not yet available, but there is no reason to expect a smaller crop than last season.

In some sections of Georgia the peaches suffered severely. The Elbertas have probably been harder hit than any of the other varieties. The estimates of damage to the total crop run anywhere from thirty to around fifty per cent.

The drop, of course, has not taken place as yet, but on all varieties except the Elbertas the peaches seem to be sticking pretty well at this date. It seems to us here that between thirty and forty per cent will easily cover the injury to the peach crop as a whole. Estimates as to carload shipments have not yet been made, but if the drop is not too heavy, this State will likely handle over 6,000 carloads. This estimate, of course, is subject to serious revision within the near future.

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Ohio
Report by F. H. Beach, Extension Specialist.

On March 30 and 31, we experienced the most severe temperatures ever recorded in this State for those dates in 44 years. Buds of the tender

the first time I have seen it. It is a very
handsome specimen. The leaves are
large and broad, and the flowers are
large and showy. The plant is
native to the United States, and is
widely distributed. It is found in
most of the states, and is particularly
common in the southern states. It is
a very attractive plant, and is
widely cultivated. It is a
perennial, and can be easily
propagated by division. It is
a good ground cover, and is
particularly suitable for
shady places. It is a
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fruits were well swollen in southern Ohio at that time and considerable injury was done to the fruit crop in the southern half of the State.

The peach crop in Ohio River counties has practically been destroyed. The sour cherry crop in that section has been heavily damaged, perhaps 50% or more. The early apple crop has been somewhat injured and indications point to a very light crop of early apples in southern Ohio this year. Late varieties of apples were scarcely damaged at all and the principal crop in southern Ohio is of the late varieties of apples and we are glad to report that at the present time this crop is in good condition.

Practically no damage has yet been done to fruits in northern Ohio. The season is at least 3 weeks behind that of a year ago, and, with the exception of the injury reported the rest of the fruit crop, is in very good condition at this time.

There will be a very light bloom on Baldwin in northern Ohio orchards that carried a crop last year.

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Indiana

Report by C. L. Burkholder, Associate in Horticulture.

We have had one of the most promising springs for the fruit business than we have had in the past 7 years. The season has been very late with pretty uniform cool weather. Fruit buds of peaches came through the winter 60 to 75 per cent alive which is ample for a crop. On account of the heavy peach crop on most of the commercial orchards over the State last year, the orchards are not in a high state of vigor, so that some of them suffered from winter temperatures more because of the weakened condition of the trees rather than to any normally adverse temperatures. Peaches are just coming into blossom at the extreme southern part of Indiana at the present writing.

Prospects for an apple crop are good. The blooming season will probably be a month later than in 1921.

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Arkansas

Report by J. R. Cooper, In Charge Department of Horticulture.

There will be around 40% of a peach crop, considering the State as a whole. The cherry crop should run 75% to 80%; Strawberries about 70%. Apples give every indication of being full crop.

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Arkansas

Report by C. Woolsey, Extension Horticulturist.

Apples not in bloom, bud crop heavy. Peach damage in northwest Arkansas approximately 50%; in the Rudy section damage approximately 20%. Peaches in the southwest part, in the Highland district are showing a damage of around 50%. Pears in south Arkansas slightly damaged, not damaged in southwest Arkansas. No damage done to grapes and with the increase acreage, considerable tonage will be shipped out of State. Sour cherries slight damage only, sweet cherries practically all killed. Hybrid and European

plums heaviest damage in southeast section leaves practically no crop. Wild Goose and American sorts very little damage. Crop will stand around 90%. Blackberries and Raspberries not damaged. Strawberries slightly damaged on south hill land south of the Boston Mountain range, practically no damage elsewhere. Temperature reached from zero to northwest extreme to 8 degrees in the Van Buren section and 18 degrees in the De Queen section.

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Washington
Report by M. D. Armstrong, Extension Horticulturist.

The fruit prospects generally over the State are excellent for the coming season. The tree fruits are heavily set with fruit buds in most districts.

Apples and Pears.

Practically no loss from winter injury. Pears in full bloom and early apples beginning to blossom. Bright warm weather to date favorable to growth and pollination.

Cherries.

Trees in full bloom with good prospects of crop exceeding 1922. Acreage of sour cherries increasing rapidly.

Peaches and Prunes.

No winter injury, with heavy set of bloom. No frost injury to date. Prospects good for large crop.

Berries.

Practically no increase in berry acreage. Prospects for larger yields of raspberries, loganberries and bush fruits generally, due to better growth conditions and to increased age and development of many plantings. Small amount of apparent winter injury in the Puyallup Red raspberry district. Considerable injury in western Washington generally, especially to Cuthbert berries. With better spring and summer growing conditions crop promises better than in 1922.

Grapes.

Acreage of Concord, Island Bell, Campbell Early and Moore Early increasing.

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New York.

From a verbal report by Prof. Oscamp to Prof. Close on his recent trip to New York it seems that the only serious injury reported is to peach and sour cherry buds in Ulster County where the temperature was as low as 30° F. below zero during the winter.

Pennsylvania.

Prof. Thayer reported to Prof. Close on his recent trip to Pennsylvania that there was no serious winter injury and that the present crop prospects are good for all fruits.

Texas.

Report by Mr. P. T. Cole, Agricultural Commissioner, St. Louis Southwestern Railway Lines.

I will state that we had a heavy freeze the night of March 18 which should have completely wiped out peach crop as the temperature ranged from 15 to 18 degrees above zero in east Texas, and it was much colder than that in Arkansas. From the best information I can get it cleaned out the largest part of the peach crop in central and northern Arkansas, and in the Bert Johnson district, southern Arkansas, it killed from 20 to 40 per cent of the crop. The apple crop in Arkansas, I understand is not hurt.

In east Texas the tomato crop was damaged 50 per cent, and I figure that there will move from east Texas about 800 to 1,000 cars tomatoes as against 1,800 last year. The peach crop to my mind, is uncertain yet, but the Elberta crop seems to be in pretty fair shape and I would not be surprised to see 600 or 700 cars of peaches move from the entire east Texas district. Mr. Butterfield of Wincna, Texas, says he has a crop of peaches this year, and the same thing is true at Athens and at Mt. Vernon. That being the case, the Cotton Belt should move around 400 cars of peaches this year.

Ordinarily a freeze as heavy as the one we had March 18 would kill the peach crop completely, but the only way I can account for it not killing them is due to the fact that we had a driving wind with this freeze that evidently dried the moisture out of the buds somewhat, and then too the buds were two weeks late and were very backward. It will be pretty hard to tell just what will happen until after the May drop takes place.

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Trip of Prof. Close to New and Pennsylvania.

In New York, Professors Oskamp and Peck have been very busy with their usual lines of work. Tree pruning has been placed on a long time basis and is a very popular line of work. In New York and Pennsylvania fruit trees are pruned for maximum production by minimum amount of pruning - and it is working, even though some "saw experts" are still skeptical.

The severe winter with heavy snow fall made conditions right for mice to girdle fruit trees in some sections, so many bridge grafting demonstrations have been held. Extension schools and community meetings have been given considerable attention. Many of the counties are well organized by communities, thus local and county fruit projects are easily arranged.

This is Prof. Thayer's first year in Pennsylvania and since the work developed so rapidly, he was recently given an assistant - Mr. R. S. Snyder - a 1921 graduate of Pennsylvania State College.

Orchard management, including pruning, spraying, cultivating, fertilizing and cover crops, is one of the major lines of work. About 30 pruning demonstrations were given of which five or six are long time propositions. A few boys and girls strawberry clubs have been organized. The size of plots is one-twentieth acre and the variety Premier. A new project, the acre home orchard, was started this year. These new orchards will contain small fruits and a few trees of each kind of tree fruit which will succeed where they are located. They are intended to replace the old farm orchards which are going out of existence.

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It is expected that Prof Close will spend May 14, 15 and 16 in Massachusetts with Prof. Van Meter; May 17, 18 and 19 in Connecticut with Prof. Darrow, and May 21, 22 and 23 in New Jersey with Prof. Mason.

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Kentucky
Report by W. W. Magill, Field Agent in Horticulture.

In answer to your inquiry in the latest issue of the "Extension Horticulturist" for fruit prospects in the various states, from my recent observations and inquiries, apple prospects are excellent so far. The cold weather does not seem to have injured the blossoms in the least. The peach crop in orchards where a good growth was made last year is still in good condition. However, in most of the sections of the State last July and August the weather was extremely dry resulting in a very small growth of new wood which in turn means a very light crop. Probably a 40% normal crop for the State will be a fair estimate. Cherries in good condition; plums probably 60%, the early blooming varieties being damaged considerably.

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Mr. Beattie spent April 16 to 19, inclusive, visiting the fruit and vegetable demonstration work in South Carolina in company with Mr. Geo. P. Hoffman and Mr. A. E. Schilletter, Extension Specialists. One outstanding feature of the work in South Carolina is the way that the county agents take hold of the fruit and vegetable demonstrations. Clemson graduates are operating many of the fruit and truck farms and are exerting a great influence upon the work in their localities.

The section around Charleston has long been noted for its truck crop production. Recently there has been a marked development of truck growing in other parts of the State, this being especially true of asparagus planting in the Blackville and Williston districts. Fruit planting, especially peach orchards, has developed rapidly during the past 3 or 4 years. The extension forces have been the guiding influence in all phases of the establishment of this industry and are looked to today for the general supervision of the enterprise. This work on the part of the specialists and county agents is to a certain degree "service," but serves as demonstrations on a large scale. The planting of large acreages of fruit in South Carolina is a direct outgrowth of the work started several years ago with home orchards.

W. R. Beattie, Extension Horticulturist.

C. P. Close, Extension Pomologist.

